

Sullivan County Democrat November 12, 2004

Fallsburg Supervisor Sees Economic Hope for Town

By Nathan Mayberg

South Fallsburg – Taxes will go up in the Town of Fallsburg by 8 percent, after the Town of Fallsburg Board unanimously approved the 2005 budget Tuesday evening.

Town of Fallsburg Supervisor Steven Levine placed the blame for the increase on a steep jump in the town's mandated contribution to the state retirement fund.

For example, Levine said that 3 percent of the budget for town employees went to the retirement fund two years ago – now that is up to over 10 percent. The portion of the police payroll which goes to the fund has shot up over 15 percent over the last couple years, he said.

However, Levine believed the addition of several major developments in the town could offset that increase next year. He said he is expecting a “major increase in assessment.”

The first of the new projects could be Pulte Homes, a 419-unit housing project across from Morningside Park. The town sold the land earlier in the year to the developers. The revenue from that deal will go towards the town's parks and recreation department.

In addition, Pulte Homes will pay \$2,000 for water and sewer hook-ups for each home, as well as a \$300 recreational fee for each home. The entire parcel will remain tax-free, said Levine.

In other business, the town held a public hearing on water and sewer district extension on Tuesday evening with no public comment.

A public hearing was set for one of the largest proposals, **Walden Pond**, a massive development in Woodbourne. The proposal includes 92 single-family lots (1/2 to 2 acre lots), 204 townhouses and 279 apartments. The developers are requesting a zoning change from REC 1 and 2 to HRI, due to its combined use for residential and commercial purposes.

That project will include approximately 45,000 feet of commercial space. Each home would range in size from 1,000 to 3,000 feet. The property is located on 197.7 wooded acres.

Jeremy Gorelick, the developer under the Fallsburg Development Corporation name (whose parent company is Emanon in Long Island), hopes to entice a national chain store, a local bank, a general store, office space for accountants and lawyers, along with a possible day care facility.

He has approached the Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency about the project and may receive tax breaks from the county.

The hearing will take place in front of the Town of Fallsburg Board at 7:45 p.m. on November 23

In response to objections from Charlotte Wilson concerning the cancellation of one of the town's water aerobics classes held at the Fallsburg High School swimming pool, the town reinstated the program.

And Levine reminded the public that the Terry Brae Golf Course is still open. Councilman Neil Gilberg announced that the town will honor those who went “above and

beyond” what was called for on Frances Currey Day this past summer. The individuals will be honored at the next town board meeting.